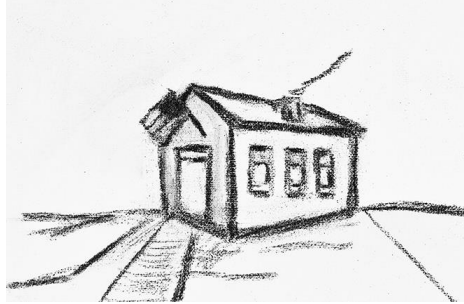


The Edwin Washington Project (EWP)

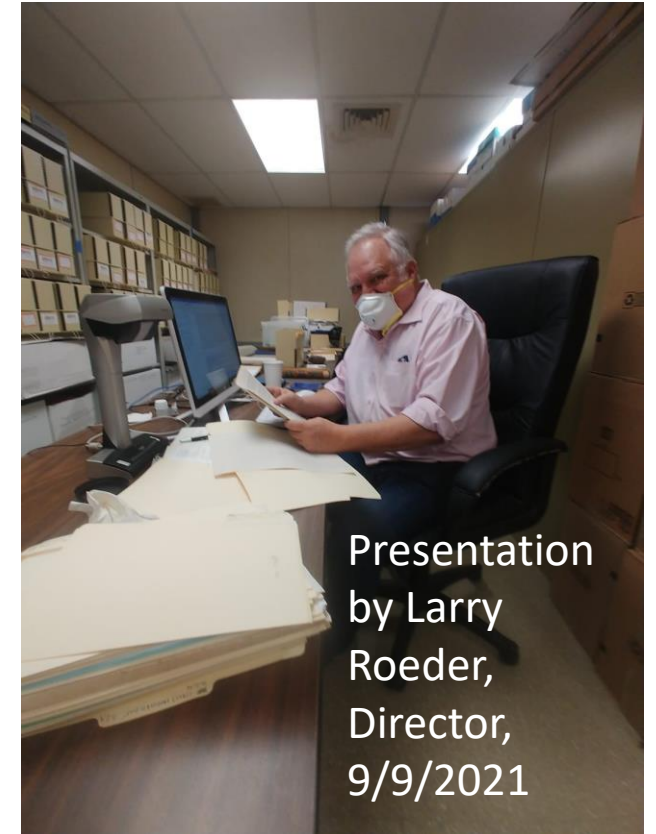


Edwin Washington of Leesburg during Reconstruction, the first Black youth documented to keep his job while attending school.

At the request of LCPS in 2014, the project documents the experiences of Blacks in Loudoun's segregated schools, as well as the causes and implications of segregation, and which organizations and people helped or stood in the way of quality education.

www.edwinwashingtonproject.org

Presentation by the Edwin Washington Project – Sept 9, 2021..
Contact: www.edwinwashingtonproject.org 703-867-2056



Presentation
by Larry
Roeder,
Director,
9/9/2021

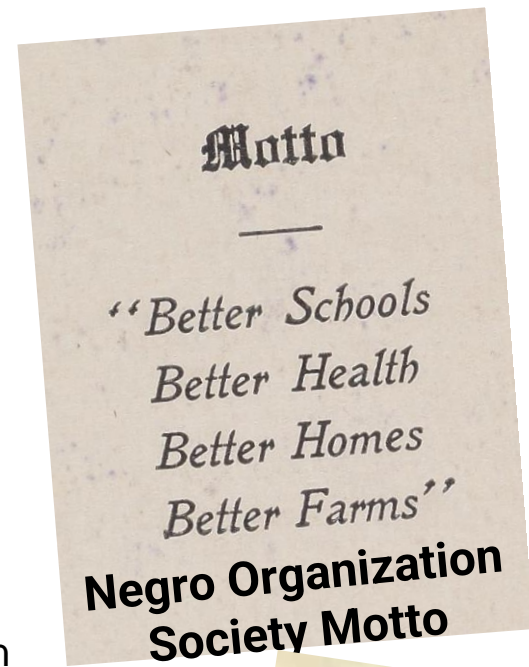
Black Education in Loudoun Before 1968 – A Summary

- A great drama. Not easy to research.
- But thanks to the archives of the Circuit Court of Loudoun County, the Records Office of Loudoun County Public Schools and various Universities from Atlanta to Washington, DC, the facts are emerging.
- It is an American story of a repressed people using the law, handwritten petitions and allies to achieve justice – a story that has not ended.
- **The Edwin Washington Project and its many volunteers have been fortunate to have access to thousands of forgotten 19th and early 20th school records discovered in the nearly abandoned Black school house to the right. – the Training Center. Built 1883.**
- We are also interviewing survivors of segregation.
- We are now telling the story through a book called *Dirt Don't Burn*, to be published by Georgetown University Press.
- Other books on transportation, schools and petitions are planned, as well as films on buses and schoolhouses.



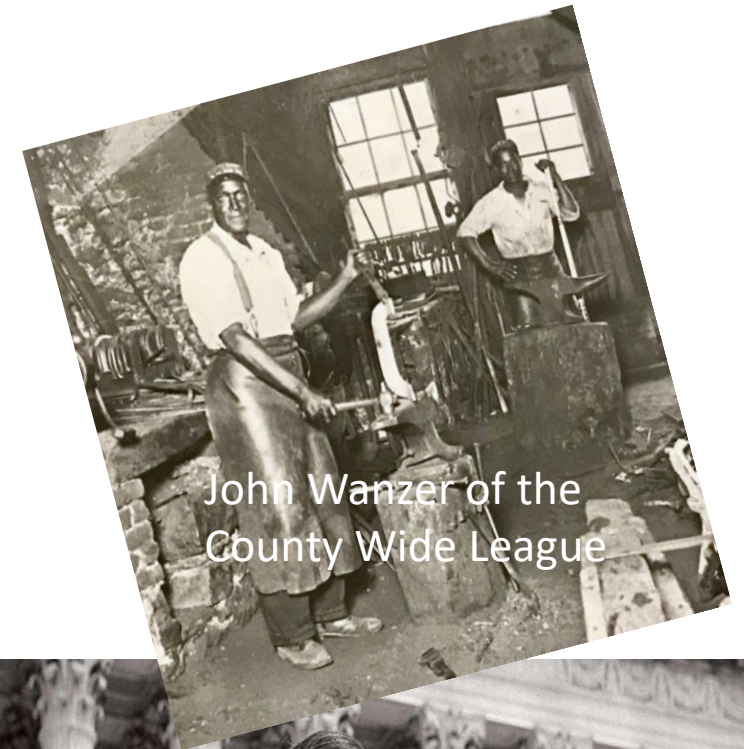
Samples of a Drama

- Between Enslavement to Integration in Loudoun in 1968, educating Blacks was held back by white subjugation. Elites would accept providing Blacks nominal support, but only if white supremacy was not threatened. For example, in Loudoun, whites had some level of school transportation as of 1911; but Blacks had none till 1937.
- Blacks repeatedly demanded fair schooling, like Edwin Washington of Leesburg during Reconstruction who kept his job while attending a Quaker school.
- A plan emerged in 1869 to provide universal free education to all Virginians by 1870; but Blacks were required to be in segregated structures with far fewer resources than provided whites. However, they had allies:
 - The Peabody and John F. Slater Funds emerged to support Black education and the creation of County Training Schools, an alternative to high schools. One existed in Leesburg, though its connection to the Slater Fund is uncertain.
 - The Jeanes Fund emerged in 1907 to pay for Black supervisors. The first in Loudoun was not hired until 1920.
 - The Rosenwald Fund established in 1917 built 367 modern school-houses for Blacks in Virginia, though not in Loudoun.
 - The Southern Education Foundation established workshops and institutes to train Black teachers at Virginia State College, and elsewhere. These were crucial to Loudoun.
 - The Negro Organization Society out of Hampton University, Black lawyers and leaders also made a difference, as well as an energized citizenry.



Samples: Continued

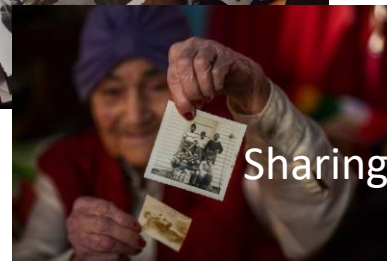
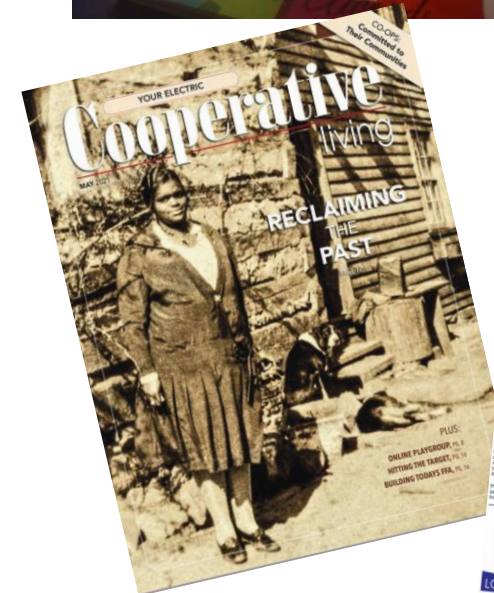
- In 1902, Virginia's new Constitution restored white supremacy. It disenfranchised most Blacks and working-class whites and remained in effect until July 12, 1971. It also gave oxygen to another half century of white supremacists like Senator Harry F. Byrd Sr, who led the massive resistance to Brown vs Board and school integration in the 1950's.
- Loudoun's school leadership supported Byrd and on 23 January 1956 both the School Board and the Board of Supervisors demanded Loudoun's Blacks agree to segregation, if they wanted desperately needed modern facilities. An original copy of the demand is in the papers we are researching
 - To their great credit, the Loudoun's Blacks through the NAACP and the County-Wide League of Black PTA's said NO.



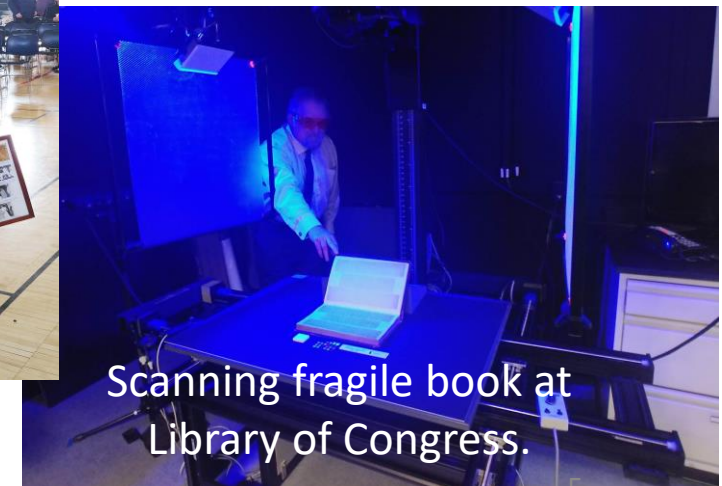
The Edwin Washington Project is a Research Organization. Join us.



- [Black History Matters](#), so the Washington Post and other media regularly cover us.
- Voted in 2019 the outstanding volunteer group in Loudoun County.
- Joined the Country-School Association of America (CSAA), studying historical rural education. CSAA calls us the largest member studying Black rural schools.
- We partner with the Library of Congress and others to use the latest technology.
- We enable local citizens to share their own resources.
- We scan historical documents owned by private citizens for free.
- We also scan old school records, including Registers.
- We are working with Georgetown University on a book about our research.



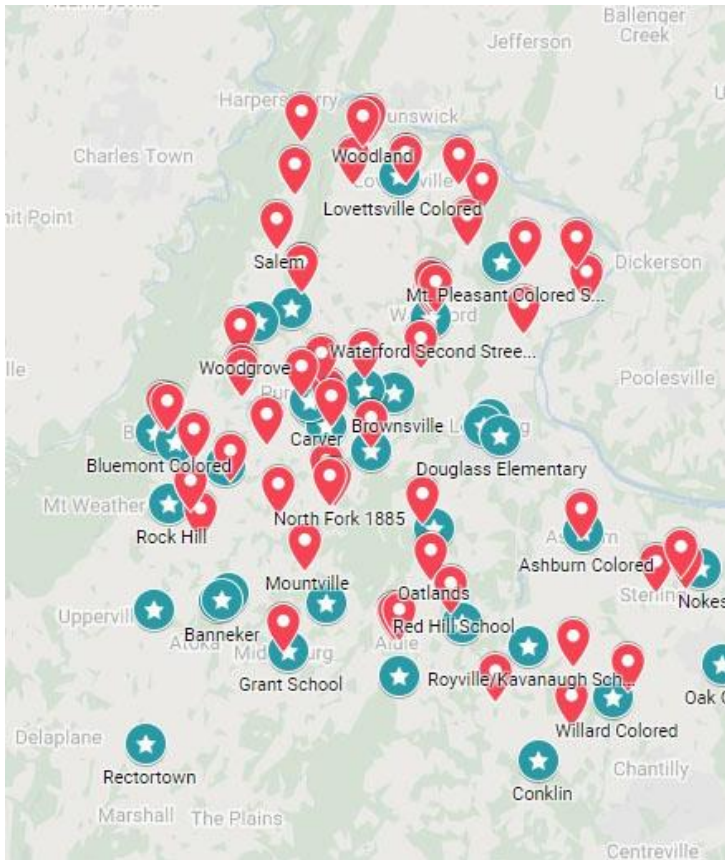
Sharing Memories



Scanning fragile book at Library of Congress.

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We have developed a database and digital map of nearly all former segregated schoolhouses.



- We use the archives of the Circuit Court of Loudoun County, especially deeds and school boxes, as well as LCPS archival records we manage, interviews, and records at Howard University, Atlanta University and other locations.
- We intend to share this effort with history clubs and organizations around Virginia and eventually craft a state-wide digital map.
- While our focus is Black history, we also track white schools and their history, which is critical for comparative research.

Research requires interviews, examining rare documents, conferences and meetings.

We are all volunteers. Some focus on handwritten petitions, methods of transportation, access to health, the curriculum and virtually any other aspect of segregated schooling. We visit all former schoolhouse sites. We also focus on document and artifact preservation.

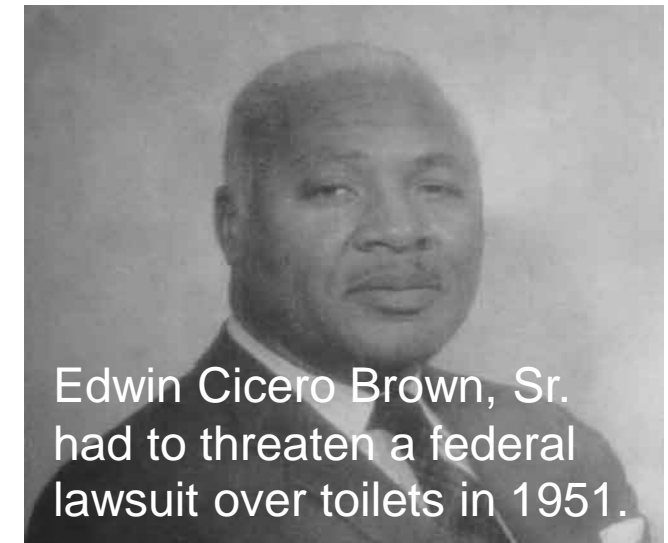
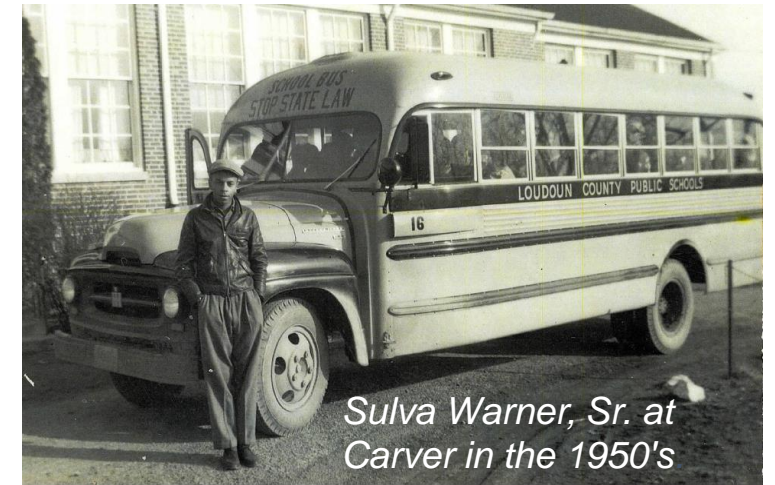


File - Petition
We prefer to have school
continued at Brownville instead
of at the Odd-Fellows Hall
in Hamilton. Dec. 22, 1922
Walter Murray
John C. C. C.
John H. C. C.



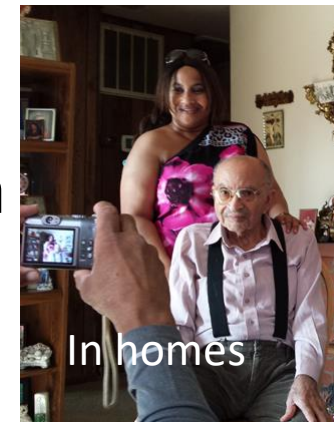
A Few Samples of Important Research Findings

- The first Black Supervisor was hired in 1920, Miss Mary Penniston. Supported by League of Women Voters.
- Blacks used petitions to keep schools open, ask for better teachers, repairs and proper salaries.
- In 1921, Black educators staged a peaceful march through Leesburg, the county seat, to celebrate their achievements.
- The first Black High School program called Leesburg HS started in 1920 and then was significantly enhanced in 1930; but had far fewer resources than white high schools.
- Douglass High School, built in 1941, was the first dedicated Black high school building, constructed on land owned by Blacks and furnished by Blacks.
- Buses were not provided Blacks until 1937.
- In the 1950's Blacks had to threaten a federal lawsuit to gain toilets at the Training Center.



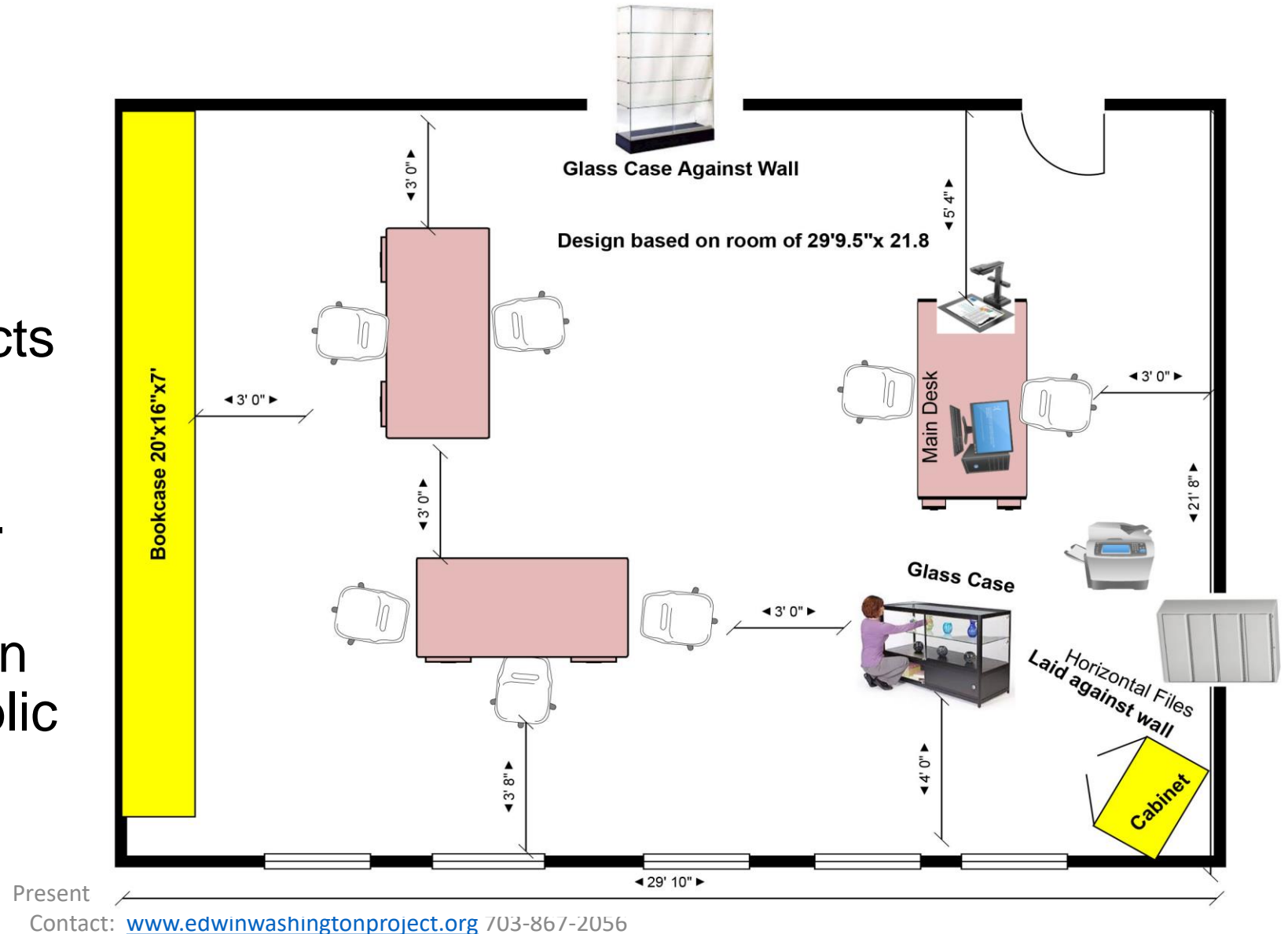
Where do we meet? Please join us.

- EWP has met at Douglass HS for several years and 2018 held a county-wide public conference attended by the Superintendent, faculty, students, and elected officials.
- We also meet in restaurants, library rooms, the Prosperity Baptist Church in Conklin, senior centers, etc.
- The main office is at Round Hill, which is too small and hard to reach for our needs.
- We are now negotiating for a larger research center at Douglass, to enable researchers and the public to:
 - Conduct comprehensive research.
 - More effectively share their stories or those of their ancestors.



Proposed Space at Douglass HS

- To be a regional research center.
- Public access Mon-Friday.
- Docents protect artifacts and help the public examine documents and conduct research.
- Larger meetings or events might be held in the office or in the public area of Douglass.



In summary

- We are incorporated as a 501©(3).
- At request of LCPS, main focus is to document all aspects of Loudoun's segregated education.
- We are collaborating with Georgetown University on a book.
- We preserve old records through digital means and by buying archival boxes and specialized bookcases.
- We interview former students, bus drivers, other LCPS staff and teachers.
- We lecture on our findings.
- We use the archives of the Circuit Court of Loudoun County, local churches and private collections.
- We also travel extensively to old school sites in Loudoun and to libraries around the nation that have relevant records.

www.edwinwashingtonproject.org

